

/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

SPRING ISSUE

Greensburg, Indiana

MAY 1994

OCCASION: Spring Meeting

DUES DUE

PLACE: Decatur County R.E.M.C.  
Recreation Room

Please remember to pay your 1994 dues which were due the first of the year. The secretary would love to get all paid up right away.

DATE: Wednesday, June 15, 1994,  
at 7:30 P.M.

\* \* \* \* \*

PROGRAM: When the Europeans arrived in this country during the seventeenth century they were amazed & confounded by the great number of mysterious mounds they discovered. Only accomplished mathematicians & engineers could have constructed these impressive works. Who were these people & what happened to them? Joe Westhafer will show slides & discuss this. Sounds good to me, see you there.

\* \* \* \* \*

DONATION

Mrs. Welby M. Frantz

\* \* \* \* \*

MEMORIAL

By Patricia A. Morris in memory of her mother, Christina F. Small.

\* \* \* \* \*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

John W. Kincaid  
Patricia A. Morris - Phoenix, AZ  
Kathryn Bailey  
Max and Doris Maudlin  
Richard M. Donnell - Columbus  
Mrs. Lester (Bev) Stiers  
Amy Osting  
Mr. & Mrs. John Secor  
Mrs. Willard (Janice) Anderson

\* \* \* \* \*

LAST MEETING—The Annual Meeting was once again held at the Fellowship Hall of the Presbyterian Church with a fine crowd of Historical Members present. An interesting program about the history of the Underground Railway was given by Louis R. Holtzclaw of Indiana University. Mr. Holtzclaw is a native of Decatur County & a graduate of Sandcreek High School. The subject was of great interest to those present, this area being quite active in the Underground Railway at one time. The speaker, being very knowledgeable & well informed, certainly held the attention of the audience. During a short business meeting conducted by President John Westhafer, all of last years officers were returned to power.

\* \* \* \* \*

Edward Eggleston in Clay Township  
(cont. from last bulletin)

In 1856 while eighteen years old, Edward began a career as a circuit rider in typical Methodist fashion. With a horse and his wardrobe in his saddlebags he rode a four week circuit with ten preaching places in and around Dearborn County, Indiana. On one occasion he preached in Greensburg.

In later years Eggleston was an editor of several magazines, a pastor, a writer of novels, history, religious and political articles. He died on September 3, 1902 at the age of 65 at Lake George, New York.

Remember Al Weybright's hack? Too long ago for you? Well, I'll tell you about it - or rather, William O. Thomson will tell you about the hack.

Even those who may not care for poetry can have fun trying to figure out the location of the liv'ry stable on the square that Thomson wrote about in another poem.

You may have seen - or heard about - the hitchin' rack that was once on the square around the courthouse. Thomson tells his memories of that in another hometown poem. If there isn't enough space for all of the poems the editor of the Bulletin will edit it for us.

William Thomson was born in Greensburg the son of John "Polk" Thomson, and grandson of Orville Thomson, newspaperman in Greensburg. William graduated from Indiana University. While working as sales representative for a law book firm he developed a habit of writing poems as he traveled across the country.

In his first book entitled "Poems of William O. Thomson," published in 1962, he wrote "Most of the poems went into the wastebasket but now and then something came through that was worth saving." These reposed in a dark closet for more than a decade and may never have seen the light of day had not one of my sons, David, known about it.

"David wrote from his home, in Kyoto, Japan, to send on the complete repertory. He picked three dozen titles out of the aggregate, had them hand-set in 9-point type. And here they are - born of straightened circumstances and buried for years in America; eventually brought to light in Japan."

Thomson was also a columnist for the Cornucopia Poetry Magazine. Olive I. Downing of "The Poet's Corner" in Indianapolis wrote the forward for his first book in which she states: "He is a lover of the great outdoors. His interest in poetry began while he was a student at Indiana University and matured during his intimate contacts with nature as a lumberman and agriculturist..."

Wayne Guthrie, popular columnist (Ringside in Hoosierland) for an Indianapolis newspaper included part of a poem by Thomson in his column. This was from a later book entitled "Rhymed Americana," published in 1967. Guthrie wrote: "As if timed purposely to a "T" - although it certainly was not - an interesting poem reached this desk the other day.

"Titled 'Monon Route,' it arrived at almost the same time as the recent termination of the last remaining passenger service on the railroad that has been identified so closely and affectionately with Hoosier life and lore."

"Written several years ago, it is one of many in an autographed copy sent by William O. Thomson, Boston, of his book of poems, 'Rhymed Americana.'"

Here are a couple of verses of the poem that we Hoosiers can especially enjoy:

When you feel a yen to travel  
On a path that's trodden well,  
Ballasted with solid gravel,  
Through a land of franjipana,  
Where the sasafrasses sprout,  
You'll go down through Indiana,  
On the ramblin' Monon Route,

Hail New Hampshire for her granite!  
Praise the marble of Vermont!  
In the center of the planet  
Rock is hotter than you want,  
But the stone that stills the critic,  
Be it temple or redoubt,  
Is the Bedford stone, oolitic,  
On the ramblin' Monon Route.

Other verses in the poem follows the "Monon Route" as it travels across the Wabash River, winds its way toward DePauw U. and Wabash College, then on to Purdue and finally back to "my Hoosier alma mater on the ramblin' Monon Route."

When I wrote some columns last year about the circus grounds east of town many readers mentioned the hack. Apparently it was a big part of the fun during circus days and during fair days, as Thomson remembers here:

"AL WEYBRIGHT'S HACK"

*AL WEYBRIGHT'S HACK*

Did you ever ride in Al Weybright's hack?  
If not you have missed a real treat;  
It carried you to the fairgrounds and back  
In a style that couldn't be beat;  
It took you aboard at the public square  
And then at a furious clip,  
Went clattering out to the county fair;  
A dime was the fare for the trip.

*Amid weird carnival sounds  
You could hear Al Weybright shout,  
"Right this way for the fairgrounds,  
"One more and we go right out!"*

Al's hack was a gem of the cartwright's art,  
Built both both for service and comfort;  
With seats, fore and aft, durable and smart,  
Upholstered in Brussel's carpet;  
Its felloes were sheathed in tires of steel,  
And as they bumped over the rocks  
The sparks shot forth from nadirs of each wheel,  
Like meteors at equinox.

*Al Weybright's lingo resounds  
Through the precincts round about,  
"Right this way for the fairgrounds,  
"One more and we go right out."*

By a spirited team the hack was drawn,—  
The geldings Brownie and Montie;  
Brownie a chestnut and Montie a fawn,—  
Accoutered in harness jaunty;  
When Al took his place on the driver's seat  
And loosened the gripping rub-lock,  
The span would go galloping out Main street;  
It had the world beat by a block.

*Al's vigorous plea abounds,  
His purpose never in doubt,  
"Right this way for the fairgrounds,  
"One more and we go right out."*

In due course of time there blew an ill wind  
That dealt Al Weybright a foul blow;  
A horseless hack, wild and undisciplined,  
Was the missile that laid him low;  
It passed Al like he was tied to a post,  
Leaving him stunned and outmoded;  
With naught left to do but give up the ghost,  
Al and his hack soon corroded.

*Though dizzy from fatal wounds,  
Al chanted his dirge throughout,  
"Right this way for the fairgrounds,  
"One more and we go right out."*

When Al Weybright arrived at the Pearly Gate  
He was driving his rusty hack;  
Saint Peter examined the candidate  
With eyes critical and exact;  
Finally he said, with a welcome air,  
"You are a blessing in disguise!  
"We are holding our annual county fair;  
"A hackman we need who is wise!"

*Al Weybright's joy knew no bounds;  
He warbled a psalm devout,  
"Right this way for the fairgrounds,  
"One more and we go right out."*

Through a festive era Al plied his hack,  
An integral part of the fair;  
When races were on at the half-mile track  
Al Weybright was sure to be there;  
The circuit he made of the pumpkin shows,  
From Ripley on through to Fayette;  
How many he serviced nobody knows;  
Lord willing, he'd been at it yet.

*Through not a Titan in pounds,  
Al's ballyhoo waxes stout,  
"Right this way for the fairgrounds,  
"One more and we go right out."*



In "The Liv'ry Stable" Thomson remembers that it was a "first class liv'ry stable and that it was on courthouse square." Could it be that this livery stable was just off the square? The one just in back of the Moss House, later the DeArmond Hotel? Perhaps you remember one that was on the square or the entrance to it was on the square. Let the editor hear from you if you do...

### *THE LIV'RY STABLE*

The town where I was born and raised,  
To boast of size unable,  
Had one component highly praised,—  
A first-class liv'ry stable.

If you were not acquainted there,  
To tell you I am able  
Of how it stood on court-house square,—  
A red brick liv'ry stable.

The building loomed two stories high,—  
A port-hole in the gable  
Through which the swallows used to fly  
To nests in liv'ry stable.

The stately portals, high and wide,  
With sliding doors, gigantic,  
Took in a steady equine tide  
In two-way lanes of traffic.

It held a status all its own  
In up-to-date appliance,  
Equipped with every patent known  
To liv'ry stable science.

A gangway ran the center through  
With stalls and bins abutting,—  
A line of flanks, in lax review,  
Into the open jutting.

The floor was laid in wooden block,—  
An ultra-classic feature  
That rendered nil all noise and shock  
From steel-shod hoof of creature.

From loft above came wafting down  
Whiffs of fragrant timothy,—  
A protein fare of far renown,  
To build equine symmetry.

Within a nook, from view shut off,  
Its bubbling flow unbroken,  
Held forth the trusty water trough,—  
A work in planking, oaken.

A bin of oats stood fortified  
Against all foul invasion;  
Sometimes a rat would sneak inside,—  
A most profound occasion.

Midway the line, a buldging rick,  
Its bulky bales aglitter,  
Supplied all inmates, Tom and Dick,  
With beds of golden litter.

Within a chamber, amidships,  
Base-burner in the center,  
Hung blankets, robes and buggy whips,—  
A treasure-house to enter.

The stable's single-harness stock  
Was spirited and gallant.  
To keep it fit around the clock  
Required a special talent.

For lazy bones it was no place;  
Hands were fast and capable;  
A bloke called Fatty set the pace  
Around the liv'ry stable.

Fat was, for better or for worse,  
For all things accountable;  
At funerals he drove the hearse,—  
The envy of the stable.

A funeral was an event  
That taxed the liv'ry stable;  
With each turnout a driver went,—  
A ride most enjoyable.

Processions then were long drawn out.—  
Headed by the village band.  
Liv'ry teams would prance about;  
Drivers held them well in hand.

When older folk were laid to rest  
A team as black as sable,  
With hearse in somber mourning dressed,  
Drew out from liv'ry stable.

There was, to lay away the young,  
Motif, white, available;  
As if it had from white swans sprung;  
Pride of the liv'ry stable.

To drummers often rigs were let,  
Serving rural clientelles;  
But what was more productive yet,—  
Lads who courted village belles.

A paying source of revenue  
Was keeping weekly boarders;  
Belonged to people, well-to-do;  
Held subject to their orders.

The country swains, in rigs replete  
With frills of latest fashions,  
When they drove to the county seat,  
Put up their steeds for rations.

The older farmers held in scorn  
The liv'ry stable forage  
And brought full feed of yellow corn  
Out of their country storage.

If you'd drive in the barn and say,  
"Put up this nag and feed it,"  
The project would be underway  
Almost before you'd heed it.

The hold-back straps they'd first unsnap,  
And then let go the traces  
And loop 'em through the britchen strap;  
Do reins up in their places.

Then one would lead the critter out,  
First to water, then to stall;  
Another'd push the rig about  
Into shed, against the wall.

The shed would fill up in a flash,  
Come a Democrat rally;  
Then, each rig numbered on the dash,  
They'd line the street and alley.

As loafin' place par excellence  
None was more hospitable;  
Always found congenial gents  
Around the liv'ry stable.

A cauldron of the latest news,  
Equal to tower of Babel;  
You'd miss nobody's recent views  
Hangin' around the stable.

In winter in the robe-room sit,  
Big stove makin' heat galore;  
A saw-dust box close by it  
Beat any brass cuspidor.

The hickory chairs lined up outside  
In weather permittable;  
You'd rest at ease while time and tide  
Flowed by the liv'ry stable.

Once I didn't come home to sup;  
With vituals on the table  
Ma sent Dad out to hunt me up;  
Found me at liv'ry stable.

When I got home my Ma arose;  
I was undesirable  
Till I went off and changed my clothes;  
I smelled of liv'ry stable.

Once in a while I drift back home,  
Like lost sheep in the fable  
And round about the town I roam,  
Lookin' for liv'ry stable.

The building stands in proper place,—  
A fact undebatable.  
Aside from this I find no trace  
Of old-time liv'ry stable.

Machines into its portals pass;  
It bears a foreign label;  
An odor strong of oil and gas  
Comes from the liv'ry stable.

You can see what the hitching rack looked like on page 17 of the 1882 Atlas. It stayed long after the auto came into popularity because many still drove their teams to town to do their shopping. There was once a big stir about the rack. Some merchants wanted it removed so that people couldn't park their wagons and buggies so close to their places of business. Seems the horsed and mules left deposits that caused an odor. Others thought that removing the rack might cause a drop in business. The ideal thing, it was thought by all, was that the city should clean up the mess more often. But, the city thought the county should clean it up. Here are the verses about the hitchin' rack that there is room to print.

*OLD HITCHIN' RACK*

My memory goes back  
To the old hitchin' rack,  
A relic of past ages, dark;  
Its iron pilasters stood,  
Like the pawns of knighthood,  
The sentinals of court-house park.

Though birds of a feather,  
They flocked not together,  
But held from each other apart;  
And the reason was plain;  
They were strung on a chain;  
None could from its station depart.

The chain, far extensive,  
Was so comprehensive,  
It reached clear around the court square;  
For matters judicial,  
And business official,  
A gap was reserved, here and there.

Business seldom was slack  
At the old hitchin' rack;  
The traffic at times was intense;  
Its patrons were steady,  
To return ever ready;  
About it there was no expense.

And the old hitchin' rack  
Went for years at a crack  
Without showing age or decay;  
And whoever forecast  
That it's heyday was past,  
Would only a blindness display.

It's irony of fate  
That we come to relate  
The plight of the old hitchin' rack;  
A mechanical giant,  
In armor defiant,  
Carried it away on his back.

And the place where it stood,  
Though it augurs no good,  
Is a sorry mess of debris;  
Maybe an illusion,  
But that's my conclusion;  
It looks like a junk heap to me.

Now, down to the sparrows,  
Our narrative narrows,  
And with their sad state we shall cease;  
Deprived of their ration,  
They died of starvation;  
No sparrow could eat oil and grease.

William O. Thomson was born in Greensburg on Dec. 10, 1885. He was 83 years old when he died January 20, 1969 while traveling in Luxor, Egypt. His last residence was Boston, Mass.

By: Patricia Smith

\* \* \* \* \*

Scrapbook, about 1885

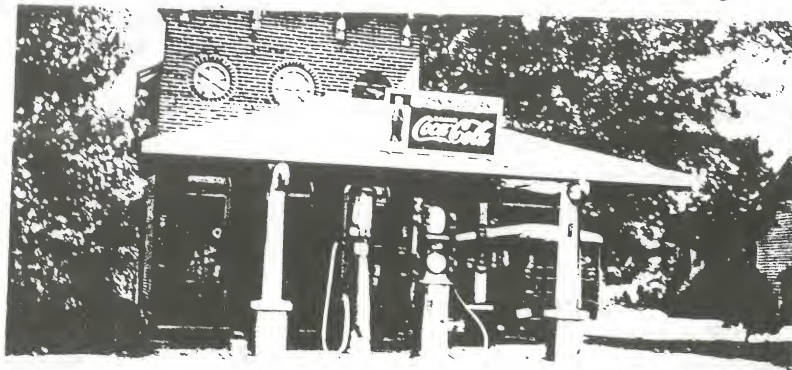
"A Destructive Fire"

About four o'clock, yesterday afternoon, the fire alarm sounded the signal that the city gas-works were on fire. Within about nine minutes from this time, the department was throwing a stream of water upon the flames, which by this time had spread throughout the main building; and within a very short time they were under the control of the department, though the task was both hazardous and difficult. Hazardous on account of the oil and gas liable to become ignited and explode; difficult, as the flames had spread throughout the building, under the tin roof.



"The work was well done, and the department is deserving of much commendation; but Will Smith, who was the only person in the room at the time the fire began, deserves more credit than all others, probably, for the valor shown to prevent what might have been a very serious fire. An oil tank, into which about thirty gallons had just been pumped, stands at the ceiling in the main room, 2nd floor, just over the boiler furnace in the basement. The oil is conducted from this to the coal furnace by pipes, about two feet of which is glass tubing to show regular flow of oil. One of these suddenly, and unexpected to Will, who is but about 15 years old, broke, and the oil poured down upon the fire below, and in an instant the flames ascended the pipes. When he saw the great danger of the 30 gallons of oil just above, he thrust himself into the flames and shut off the flow, thus saturating his clothing with burning oil. He saw his immediate danger, rushed across this room, to the opposite side of an adjoining one and up a ladder to the top of a large water tank, into which he plunged and thus saved his life, no doubt, though badly burned in preventing a much more serious fire. Will should be well rewarded. Estimated loss from \$500 to \$1,000. The machinery was sufficiently repaired to produce gas for last night's consumption. The building received the greater damage."

E. A. Mc Brown  
W.N.T.



Decatur

Mobile - Sardina

#### MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS

Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

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Life Membership \$100.00

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#### MEMORIALS

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

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802 E.Beechwood Dr., Grbg.  
Ph: 663-7263  
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2nd. V. Pres.....Herb Scheidler  
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Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Maurice Keith

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(complete D. Swegman's term)  
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Patricia Smith  
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Diana Springmier 2 yrs.

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Rosalie Robbins

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THE BULLETIN

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

SUMMER ISSUE

Greensburg, Indiana

JULY 1994

OCCASION: Summer Meeting of the  
Historical Society

DATE: Wednesday, Aug. 17, 1994,  
at 9:30 A.M.

PLACE: North side of Courthouse  
square.

PROGRAM: Conducted Tour to the His-  
torical Village & State Fair. Price  
to be announced, but reasonable.

\* \* \* \* \*

DONATIONS

Omega Chapter, Tri Kappa  
Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Gilchrist, Baltimore,  
Ontario, Canada

DUES-If you have a Red Star stamped on  
your address label, we have not receiv-  
ed your dues (\$5.00 per member) for  
the year of 1994. Please remit soon.

\* \* \* \* \*

MY RAINBOW MODEL T

BY: Gladys L. Barber

Say, folks, I've got a real nice car  
It's all painted up, you see,  
It's the color of the rainbow,  
It's a wonderful Model T.  
On one door it says "To enter,"  
On the other side "To exit."  
But I can't take my girl a ride  
Far on the gas tank she'd have to sit.  
I asked her just the other day  
If she'd like to take a ride  
She looked at me so angry like,  
Then to me she soon replied,  
"No, I wouldn't ride with you  
In that rainbow Model T  
Besides, Please tell me where I'd sit,"  
I said, "Here on my knee."  
Still she was very angry,  
Then she looked up at me  
And said, "If you don't want to ride alone,  
Get a car, not a Model T."

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mr. & Mrs. William Boone  
Bonnie Clark  
George Chadwell  
Joe Stein  
Roger Gabbard  
Jean Burnett  
Betty Austin  
David Lee - Shelbyville

\* \* \* \* \*

LAST MEETING-This was the Spring Meeting  
and was held Wednesday evening June 15th  
at the recreation room of the R.E.M.C.  
Building. A very nice sized crowd of  
Society members & guests were well enter-  
tained by a slide talk given by Joe  
Westhafer. Joe spoke about the myste-  
rious mounds found in this country when  
the first settlers came. Also, about  
those who engineered & constructed them.  
A very interesting talk about a quite  
interesting subject. The Society wishes  
to thank Joe for his time & talent. A  
short social time concluded the meeting.  
A very agreeable evening.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Court House Clock.

From: Greensburg Standard, March 1904

The court house clock, like health,  
is not appreciated until missed. For  
months past the clock has indicated the  
exact time to the four quarters of the  
city, and the welcome strokes or the  
familiar bell have regulated the meal-  
time and bed-time of many a home which  
has not yet indulged in the extravagance  
of a waterbury clock. But on last Sat-  
urday Ed Dannacher resigned his place  
and refused longer to ascend the tower;  
hence the old clock, the faithful mon-  
itor, was allowed to run down and all  
day Monday, anxious glances were cast  
toward the tower and disappointed looks  
became so numerous that Fred Boyl mount-  
ed the ladder and soon set it agoing.



### THE COMMON RAIL

Written By: James S. Scott, Rushville, Indiana

This paper is for the younger gentlemen of this society. They were not here to know about and get to use the handy gadget of the first hundred years of Rush County! The gadget I'm writing about was the common fence rail, at least it was common to the county until about WW II. No other tool or piece of equipment was so versatile and it influenced men and mens lives in many ways.

In the earliest colonial days, laws were passed requiring rails to be exactly 11 foot long. The width was not controlled but the length was most exact. The towns were platted with streets 2 rails wide and alleys 1 rail. Six rails in length made a surveyors chain." A man could judge the size of a field or area by counting the rails in the fence.

Early settlers of Rush County found the land covered with dense growth of trees. Many were used to build the cabins, many were rolled into piles and burned, some were deadened and farmed around until they were dry enough to burn in a standing position and fall from one to the next, causing it to burn thus causing a bowling pin action, but many of the straight grained trees, such as walnut, were rolled into piles near the cabin and left to dry. These were split into rails. One man in our history became president of the U.S. partly because of his reputation as a rail splitter. Pictures in my old history book showed Young Abe splitting logs into rails with an axe. This mistaken idea gave me a false impression of how they were split until I tried to split one with an axe. Mauls and hard wood wedges were the tools mostly used. The Maul was a knot or burl cut from an elm tree, a hole bored or burned into it and a hickory handle inserted. Thus a heavy, almost indestructible, hammer was made. The wedges were made from some kind of hard wood and of various length and width. With these two home made tools and a common axe, the early farmer was able to split the logs already on his farm and fence it and measure his acreage at the same time. Two types of fences were made, the straight rail fence ran from post to post. This was a permanent type and required posts being set every eleven foot, with holes bored through them and rails sharpened to fit snugly in the holes. Fences of this type usually had 3 to 5 rails high. They would turn horses or cattle but not so good for hogs or chickens.

When the Brookville land office opened in 1820, many of the early settlers had jumped the gun and had started clearing and fencing the plot of ground which they intended to claim. These people were squatters living on Congress Land. The early fence of Rush County was needed more to keep animals out then to keep them in, so the straight rail fence was not as suitable as a "snake" rail fence, so most of ours became "snakes". These took far more rails and used up more land area, but we had plenty of both. The pioneer cleared an area and built his cabin and fenced out the critters. As time went on he could clear more ground and easily enlarge his fenced area. We had no strict rule on length, so rails varied from short to very long, but each farmer tried to cut his own rails the same length so he could practice the custom of "inter-changeable parts". These snake fences could and were constantly being moved as more ground was cleared. All were used to fence out rather than fence in animals. Hogs and cattle were turned out to graze on government land or your neighbors unfenced corn and wheat field. Many line fence problems arose and each township had officers, called "fence viewers" whose job it was to keep established where the line fence should be when neighbors disputed. The land had been surveyed before the land office opened but buyers often tilled his farm and used the land unclaimed until he really didn't want to know his boundary line and refused to give up land when purchased by a new neighbor. Thus the "fence viewers" must be someone someone of influence in the community. These



were often the best rifle shot, corner man for log cabins, or blacksmith. A man was judged by what he could do, not how much money he had or who his father was.

By 1850 there were millions of rails in use in the county, not only for fence but the uses were so many it is hard to believe we can farm or even survive without them. The snake fence was so constructed that is "zig-zagged" and where each zig met a zag, a fence corner was made, so about every 8 or 10 foot, you had a fence corner on each side of the fence. These were a boon to man and nature and a thorn in the side of farmers who were perfectionists. Weeds, grass, briars and bushes sprang up in these uncultivated corners. Wild life took cover, ground hogs dug holes. Hired hands found a hidden spot to take a nap, sows had pigs in these shaded corners, boys found out the pleasures of life, both by hand with female help. Any of these corners could be opened into gaps to use temporarily or posts set and a gate could be hung. These corners, close to the house, were often used as an "outhouse". A smooth rail was laid across a corner and there, perched high and dry, the call of nature was fulfilled while the breeze fanned the bare rear end. These corners caught the blowing leaves and became excellent nests for young animals but when dry, often were ignited by lightning or little boys hiding to smoke the "long green" snatched from the dry rack in the barn. All fences led to the house or barn and this hazzard was always a fear the pioneer had. There was no fire fighting equipment but wooden buckets and very few people to help. Most pioneers eventually got a "conch shell" and tin horn and later many bought dinner bells to sound an alarm in case of death or danger. Each bell had its own sound and neighbors or even horses could recognize whose bell was ringing.

A well built fence with 10 rails high was considered ideal and were talked of as "bull proof, horse high and hog tight". Many of these fences stood and did their work for 100 years. The invention of barbed wire made them better for some people. Stretching a single strand along the top to keep animals from reaching over to eat the greener grass on the other side. Rush Countians were great lovers of horses and many farmers had seen the cruel cuts of barbed wire on horses, so many refused to install it where horses might get out.

The early corn cribs were made of rails. They were built much like a log cabin but had no doors or windows. A layer of brush or corn stalks or sometimes rails were laid on the ground on a high spot and the pen was started with about forty rails. This made a square pen about 10 ft. by 10 ft. and about height of the wagon. Corn was scooped until the pen was rounded high in the middle, then more rails were added. This process went on until the scooper could no longer scoop high enough to get the corn over the side. Farmers prided themselves in the height of their cribs. The high cribs quietly told any passerby of the strength of the farmer who lived there and as each man was the protector of his possessions, told would-be thieves to move on to shorter corn cribs.

Each corn crib held a different amount, depending on the length of the rails used and average width of the rail. These were laid big end to little end to keep the top almost level. The last few layers of rails were allowed to slope slightly to the West, so the water could run off the wide planks which were used as a roof.

Hired corn shuckers were paid by the bushel in the crib. Corn yielded from 40 to 60 bushel per acre and it took a good shucker to get 100 bushels a day. Some could but most could only talk about it. Farmers used the same rails year after year, so they pretty well knew how much their cribs had in them when 30 or 40 or 50 rails high. When the corn was shucked and the corn in the cribs was leveled down, the ritual of measuring was performed. The length and width of the inside was measured and the height to the level of the corn noted. When all three dimensions were agreed on, each took the figures and with an agreed on formula, tried to get an agreeable answer. The formula most often used was  $X \frac{5}{12}$  before December 1st or  $X \frac{4}{9}$  after December 1st.



This date was chosen as the time corn changed from wet to dry condition, farmers didn't want to pay for shucking water. Many could not work this problem or the two couldn't get an answer so they would choose a 3rd party and agree to abide by his figures. The person most often used was the local Justice of Peace. Many men who couldn't read or write, could come within a few bushels in a crib by "eye balling" it. This as simpler and often the way it was handled. You can see how short rails or long rails might be to the farmers advantage.

Corn was removed from these doorless cribs by knocking out about 3 rails from the bottom on one side. Corn could then roll out the bottom. With rails gone only little pigs could get into the cribs. Old sows and fat hogs cleaned up the corn and more corn rolled out. This was an early self-feeder.

The above named uses were what rails were made for but is only a small percent of the thousands of uses found for them. The earliest train to come to Rush County, came from Shelbyville to Morristown to Carthage and into Knightstown. Rushville was not touched because Madison was the south end of the line and they had a meat packing industry that wanted Quaker hogs from the Carthage area. Quakers wouldn't use corn to make whiskey, so they fed it to their hogs, and drove them to Cincinnati to market. Madison felt if they could get hog cars to Carthage, they could buy the corn-fed hogs cheaply and steal the Cincinnati market. So in 1839-40 the track was completed, using rails of wood with strips of iron nailed on with square iron nails. This venture was not very successful as the road bed was over swampy ground, so the rails sunk into the mud and the cars were stuck or turned over when one side sunk and the other didn't. Sometimes the nails would pull out and the iron band would roll up. These were called "snake heads" and were dangerous to the locomotive. This road didn't last long but couldn't have been built at all without rails as green poles were limber and sagged between the scattered cross ties.

Rails were often used as corduroy road to cover muddy areas and for bottoms of bridges. Main Street of Rushville had many layers of rails from the Laughlin log dam to the hill at Fourth Street. In the spring a new layer of rails was laid and covered with sand. This worked many years until the brick streets were laid in the 1880's.

Country schools grounds were surrounded by a rail fence. This was to keep animals out, as fences couldn't be made high enough to keep kids in. A swing set was made from 3 rails--2 posts and a cross piece of rail, with a grape vine as a swing. The fence made ideal teeter boards and every kid in school could teeter at the same time, if he could find a partner. Weight of partner made little difference because the heavy took the short end and thus the law of balance was understood. Until some kid jumped off when he was down and left his partner in the high position. One soon learned the value of a smooth wide rail after sitting on a sharp edge of a rail, splinters were bad on new rails, well seasoned walnut rails were soft and almost free of splinters.

Butchering time was an exciting time. Three rails were chained together to make a tripod. Broken rails were saved and piled near the lard kettle, a hot fire was soon going. The hog was shot and pulled up into the tripod with a block and tackle. There hung Mr. Hog, head down, a knife was stuck in his neck and the blood ran out and was caught in containers to be used for blood pudding. The hog was then dipped into a barrel of scalding hot water. If the water was just the right temperature, the hair would easily slip off with a scraper but if a little too hot or too cool, the hair would set and was almost impossible to remove without skinning the hog like a beef was skinned. Nearly every job on the farm used rails for something. Most wagons had a handy place to carry a rail or two just in case one was needed. If a wagon wheel



came off or broke, you could use the rail as a lever to pry the axle up and put the wheel on again. If the wheel was broken, a rail could be used as a skid for a short distance in place of the wheel. In later years, they were often used to jack up one wheel of a Model T Ford, as they cranked much easier when one hind wheel was clear of the ground. Rails were needed to change the high pressure 33½ tires which often blew out. It wasn't uncommon to see a Model T in a muddy road with a rail sticking out the back curtain to help in case he got in a rut and needed to be pried out. A Model T following a high wheeled jolt wagon on a muddy road often needs a rail to help them along or to turn off the rutted road.

Rails have always been used in Halloween pranks. A fence built across a country road caused people to think the road had just quit. Often people slept in the buggy while the old horse took them home. Near Halloween, a horseman better stay awake or his horse may come onto a rail fence and stop and the driver wake up far from home with the sun in his face.

My Grandfather Hood told me that in 1855 or 1856, the boys around Richland hauled several wagon loads of rails and put them through a side window of the Richland Academy. The front room was 12 foot long, so rails just fit. They piled them neatly on the floor against the front door which opened in. The next day no one could go in until someone climbed in the window and slide the rails outside. The next year they made like a corncrib of rails on the ground and drove the principals old cow on the platform and by raising one corner at a time and slipping in more rails, they were able to get her level with the flat roof of the 2 story building, they then led her off the crib onto the roof and hauled all the rails away. The next morning the principal awoke with his cow bawling to be milked from the roof top. This trick had gone too far. There was not much doubt who the guilty ones were, so they were rounded up and made to build another crib to take the cow down.

Often a sick or injured person was carried on a blanket between two rails. Some rascals were carried out of town astride a sharp rail. Early cabin beds used rails as sides. If rails could talk they would be got for Hodge to interview in Oral History.

Many sayings have been derived from rails and are used by people that never saw one. "Stiff as a rail, skinny as a rail, straight as a rail and stout as a rail". These are not used as often as they used to be but when I see a tall girl, I wonder if the old saying "it takes a long rail to make a good teetering", is really true.

Woven wire fences brought an end to the rail fence slowly. Farmers began to build wire stretches and take up the old "snakes". These removed rails were leaned against trees in the pasture in a capitol A formation. These were like long wooden tents. I've had much fun playing hide and seek in the long rows of rails standing on end waiting to be put to use at other jobs. The great depression came, farmers and their hands hard up for fuel, used the buck saw on these beautiful walnut rails and burned them in air-tight stoves, WW #2 closed and we could notice no rail fences and fewer rail cribs and these were replaced by cheap, oak Napoleon cribs which lasted a few years and were replaced by metal bins for shelled corn.

The passenger trains on which the conductor would shout "All Aboard", and some smart assed kid would respond....."if you can't get a board, get a rail and if you can't get a rail, get an old cows tail" have about gone the way of the rail.

\* \* \* \* \*



Introduction to a St. Paul School History  
By: Bob Mitchell

There is little doubt that our schools in Decatur Co. began with the intellectual climate of the Eastern States in the early eighteen hundreds.

Eleven years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence the Congress of the Confederation made an attempt to provide free education for that part of the Northwest Territory in which Indiana would eventually lie. The Congress provided that the Territory should be divided into townships and that one section (640 acres) of land in each township be set aside and the income from this was to pay the costs of a school system. These were sometimes called "districts".

This doesn't need to imply that the American Revolution left a sophistication that dominated the Country. It merely provided a spring-board of desire that our hardy fore-fathers (and mothers) carried with them in their reckless, impulsive exploration of the New Territory.

Not much was done with this resolution until after Indiana was admitted to the Union in 1816, but it laid the groundwork for the pioneer dream of a free education for every child.

The definition of the word "school", "a place where instruction was given" might even be a harsh play on words. These pioneers certainly were "educated" by their experiences.

Thus the early squatters who first settled in the Indiana territory brought with them a curiosity for education that they instilled in their new surroundings. They carried with them a few volumes of Chaucer, Browning, Gray, a book of elementary arithmetic perhaps and, of course the Bible. Like the first English Sunday School these books provided the cultural atmosphere for the education of the future generations.

For the first several decades, during the primary settling period, the educational system had a low priority. The mere hardship of existence sapped the energy of all ages. Hence the first "schoolin" was a kind of catch as catch can.

After the St. Mary's Ohio Treaty with the Indians in 1818, the explorers, squatters and adventurers who were in our area took on a semblance of "settlers". The settling down process included the establishment of permanent, or near permanent housing and allowed a certain amount of family and neighborhood cohesion.

The 1818 legislature passed a law providing for a trustee of each county and he was charged with the responsibility of accumulating funds to establish a "secondary" school. This school was to prepare students for the township schools mandated by Congress, and to get them ready for University. The plan was to provide a "school of higher level". In most cases this was not difficult to accomplish since there were no schools of lower level.

Decatur Co. was organized in 1822, and there was such a seminary established in 1833. In passing we might note that the facilities for higher learning during these years were meager. While numerous institutions were established, called "seminaries" or "academies" they were of a private nature and took on the character of a boarding school. There were seldom two alike since there were few guidelines for academic standardization. The schools evidenced the personalities of their proprietors, whose qualifications were sometimes of questionable validity. One such school, but a good



one, was in the St. Paul neighborhood in the 1830's and '40's. It counted among it's "graduates" one student destined to sit high in the councils of the Nation. Thomas A. Hendricks, Governor, Senator and Vice President of the U. S. attended the Robinson Academy located about four miles from St. Paul. The Robinson Academy was named after it's founder John Robinson, and like many well intended but ill-financed schools like it, vanished as quickly as it came. No doubt it's life was simultaneous with that of it's founder and no successor was found to carry on. Mr. Robinson, however, must have been a well qualified professor.

From 1818 to the late 1820's the clusters of families became neighborhoods from which grew settlements from which communities, from which grew the inclination to give time to the schooling of the young.

One contributing factor to the cultural growth of the fledgling State was Robert Owen's experiment in community living in New Harmony. This model community brought many scholars and scientists from the eastern states to Indiana in 1825. The influence of these men reached out stimulating the other early Hoosiers.

Even with the incentive of the Owen utopian influence, however, there were no "free" schools until the Caleb Mills pressure of the early 1850's. During those 30 odd developing years every community, or even neighborhood, created an educational system that still exists in some parts of the world today. The "subscription", or "common" school was little more than a tutoring encounter. There were times when the teacher could hardly be distinguished from the pupil, certainly not by size, dress, or in some instance intellectual training. It was an exchange of knowledge dealing mostly with the three "r's". In some cases you may be sure the "exchange" could have benefited the teacher more than the pupil. The "masters" qualifications were sometimes suspect. The recommendation for one applicant was "he can read a little and write some". The teacher could never call teaching his livelihood and "got by" living with the families and boarding "around".

The term of school was usually the three bad months of winter. In the good days of spring, summer and fall every available hand was needed. Even in the "good" days of winter absences were the rule. Instead of "snow" days of this age, they might call off school because of "good" days when the students could be better used at home.

(continued in next issue The Court House)

\* \* \* \* \*  
It's all painted up, you see,  
It's the color of the rainbow,  
It's a wonderful Model T.  
On one door it says "To enter,"  
On the other side "To exit."  
But I can't take my girl a ride  
Far on the gas tank she'd have to sit.  
I asked her just the other day  
If she'd like to take a ride  
She looked at me so angry like,  
Then to me she soon replied,  
"No, I wouldn't ride with you  
In that rainbow Model T  
Besides, Please tell me where I'd sit,"  
I said, "Here on my knee."  
Still she was very angry,  
Then she looked up at me  
And said, "If you don't want to ride alone,  
Get a car, not a Model T."

\* \* \* \* \* From: Greensburg Standard, March 1904

The court house clock, like health, is not appreciated until missed. For months past the clock has indicated the exact time to the four quarters of the city, and the welcome strokes or the familiar bell have regulated the meal-time and bed-time of many a home which has not yet indulged in the extravagance of a waterbury clock. But on last Saturday Ed Dannacher resigned his place and refused longer to ascend the tower; hence the old clock, the faithful monitor, was allowed to run down and all day Monday, anxious glances were cast toward the tower and disappointed looks became so numerous that Fred Boyl mounted the ladder and soon set it agoing.

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After the St. Mary's Ohio Treaty with the indians in 1818, the explorers, squatters and adventurers who were in our area took on a semblance of "settlers". The settling down process included the establishment of permanent, or near permanent housing and allowed a certain amount of family and neighborhood cohesion.

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/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

FALL ISSUE

Greensburg, Indiana

OCTOBER 1994

OCCASION: Fall Meeting

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

DATE: Wednesday, Nov. <sup>16</sup>~~3~~, 1994  
at 7:00 P.M.

Keith Reed

\* \* \* \* \*

PLACE: Decatur County Public  
Library, East Main St.

PROGRAM: John Hunt Morgan, Brings the War to Indiana, is the title of the talk to be given by Harry M. Smith. Mr. Smith is the Fayette County Historian, and lives in Connersville, Ind. This looks to be a very interesting subject. One that involves Decatur County back in the Civil War days. Don't forget the date and place, bring a prospective member or friend. Refreshments will be served.

\* \* \* \* \*

MUSEUM DONORS

Katherine Hazelrigg  
Marla & Alan Lucas  
Paul Thompson  
Dorothy McCreary

Fredonna Barnett  
Sarah Reed  
Judy Pingel

\* \* \* \* \*

10. FRONT - 1865 DISCHARGE  
BACK - CONFEDERATE MONEY

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

Continued from: Introduction to a St. Paul School History

"School" was always in the daylight hours to take advantage of what light could filter through the oiled paper windows. They met where they could, more often than not in a home, which must tell us something about the size of the classes. Truly, some schools were almost single family affairs with neighborhood children attending as they could afford to pay or "board" the teacher. When a school outgrew the home, any building that was available was pressed into service. Funds for building were simply not part of the subscription picture.

Text books, as mentioned before, were whatever volumes were available with some elementary arithmetic, or "numbering" books and english "primers" usually loaned by some family. Books were one of the first shipments ordered by early Hoosiers.

It was customary, even preferred by some, for students to study "aloud". This was interpreted by the uninitiated as "learning noise". Some students found it expedient to substitute volume in inverse ration to knowledge. The resulting bedlam was impressive!

Many times, depending on the ability and skill of the teacher, singing was combined with teaching. Multiplication tables were sung, as were certain english grammar usage rules. Rhythm and poetry have always had a place in our educational sys-



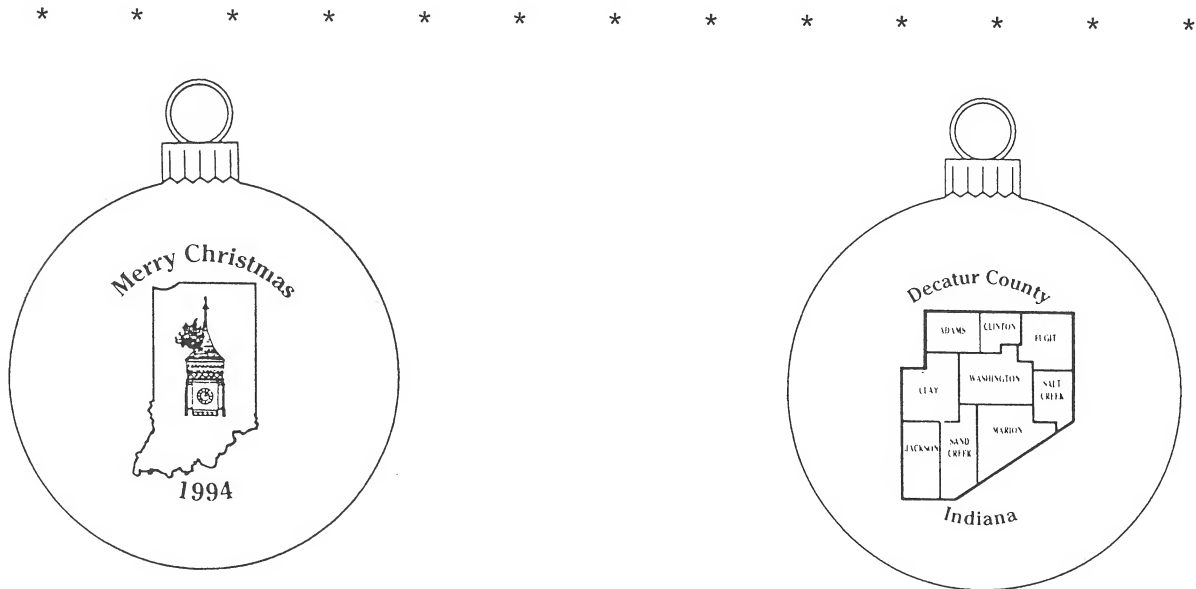
tem and, depending on the expertize and ingenuity of the teacher, could be most effective. For example one of Decatur County's teachers is credited with this well remembered rule:

No rippin' no tearin'  
No cussin' no swearin'  
No clingin' no swingin' to trees!

One of the "new" principles of teaching in the age of the 1960's and 1970's is the "open concept school", where students have a freedom of movement and education according to his or her skills. The early pupils of Decatur Co. didn't call it by that name, but they knew the principle. The one room school of the early 1800's was the fore-runner of the "open concept".

"Open concept" of that day might have had more reference to the physical facilities of the earliest days. Oiled paper for windows in a one room building. A fire place or "round bellied" stove. Benches of split logs with short legs drilled into the half round side. (backs were supplied by the students as part of their original equipment) "Air conditioning" also would stir slightly different memories.

It is obvious that education in those days was as much a measure of economics as it was intellect. It was "pay by the student or as you can". The more affluent the family, the better the tutors, hence the better the education. The inequalities of the system were obvious and through the efforts of Caleb Mills the State Legislature mandated the establishment of "free" schools in 1851. Caleb Mills was called the "father of the free public school system" and it was through his influence that the financing and administration of the system were written into the State Constitution. The system became a reality in 1853 and has undergone constant efforts for improvement ever since.



Pictured above is the 1994 ornament being sold now by the Decatur Co. Historical Society. The ornament is the same size as the one last year, and is also the same price, \$6.00.

It is Matte Blue, and has a design on both sides. It was designed by Brian Keith.

The drawing on the page before shows the front and back. Each ornament is housed in its own box. On one side, in gold, is the outline of Decatur County with the outline of each township printed therein, the names of the townships are in white letters. The state of Indiana is on the other side, and within the state, the tree on the tower.

The 1994 ornament is on sale now at Taff Furniture, Hunter's Pharmacy and Fifth Third Bank, main bank and the drive-in.

\* \* \* \* \*

One of the welcome donations to the Historical Society Museum in recent weeks was material from the Wright Drug Store, located on the East side of the square until it closed in 1972. The donation was brought to the museum by Judy Pingel, a niece, from Hendricks County.

Some of the historians in the county can tell us for sure but I believe this drug store can be traced back to the first store in Greensburg. Here is the sequence of the store as I believe happened:

The first store is known, according to Harding's History of the county, to have been started on the north side of the square by Henry Talbott in 1822. It is believed to have been located on the northeast corner where the new attorney's building was recently built;

In 1824 Henry Talbott married Eliza Hendricks, daughter of Thomas Hendricks, and the next year Talbott went into business with his father-in-law and they moved the store to the southeast corner of the square, on property owned by Hendricks, where the DeArmond Hotel eventually was built;

After Hendricks died, Talbott took another partner, J. S. Moss, and the firm of Talbott & Moss was in business for many years;

When Talbott left the partnership Moss took T. C. Wright as a partner. The store was moved north a few doors and still later they moved next door to 108 N. Franklin. T. C. Wright operated the store until 1952 when F. E. Lashbrook bought it although it continued to be known as Wrights Drug Store.

That is a brief, nutshell history of the store. Someone who knows, or has the time to really dig into the history of this store could entertain us all by writing it for the next Bulletin.

My purpose of writing about the store is to tell of one particular incident in the history of the store. T. C. Wright applied for a patent for "Coverts Pills" which was "a vegetable laxative and an active liver cathartic". The label that Wright had designed for the pills is pictured.

The following letters, written to and from Thomas C. Wright, in his effort to secure a patent for the medicine make interesting reading and were included in the material given to the museum by Judy Pingel:

Copy letter to Wright dated Jan. 27, 1933  
" " Feb. 4, 1933  
" from Wright dated Feb. 20, 1933  
" to Wright dated April 25, 1933  
" letters (all on 1 page) dated April 27, 25

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

CINCINNATI STATION  
ROOM 411, GOVERNMENT BUILDING  
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TELEPHONE: MAIN 6720-LINE 46

JF  
IN REPLY REFER TO  
DR. COVERTS PILLS

Cincinnati, Ohio, January 27 1933

Mr. Thomas C. Wright  
Greensburg Indiana

Dear Sir:

I have just this morning received your letter, undated, asking comment on the label you propose to use on a package of pills.

I am sure you will realize that we cannot pass on the suitability of the label without knowing the composition of the product itself. If you ~~can~~ to furnish us with the formula for this preparation and copy of all printed matter that will be used in the marketing of the pills we will be glad to furnish you comments.

Respectfully

*S. A. Postle*  
S. A. Postle  
Chief, Cincinnati Station

*Label submitted to Department at  
Cincinnati and formula submitted  
Jan: 31-1933. Comments  
no citation.*

*Formula & Label taken to this Department  
by J. C. Wright in Person. In opinion of  
Department Label is OK.*



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February 4, 1933

T. C. Wright, Druggist  
Greensburg, Indiana

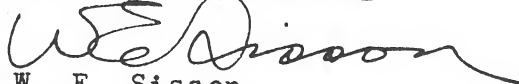
Dear Sir:

I am sorry that it has taken a few days longer than I anticipated to get some word to you about the special tablets you are planning to market.

Our chief pharmacist, who is also in charge of our special formula work, after going over the matter gives the opinion that the description "a vegetable laxative" is inaccurate. It is his opinion, also, that the statement "an active cathartic" would be better than the statement "an active liver cathartic." The statement "an active cathartic" would not, we believe, occasion any objection.

If, however, you would like to take this matter up with the proper authority, your letter should be addressed to W. J. Campbell, Chief of the Food and Drug Administration, Washington, D. C.

Very truly yours,  
ELI LILLY & COMPANY

  
W. E. Sisson,  
Merchandising Dept.

WES:EC

THOMAS C. WRIGHT  
DRUGGIST

GREENSBURG, IND., Feb 20 1933

U S Patent office  
Trade Mark Division  
Sir, I wish to register the  
Name  
" Dr Coverts Pills

J C Wright Druggist  
" Greensburg Ind

Will you please tell me the  
amt. of Cost and the way  
to proceed in order to accomplish  
this

resp Yours  
J C Wright

MEMBER OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF U. S

# *The National Association of Retail Druggists*

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CHARLES EHLERS, CINCINNATI, OHIO

April 25, 1933

Mr. T. C. Wright,  
Greensburg, Ind.

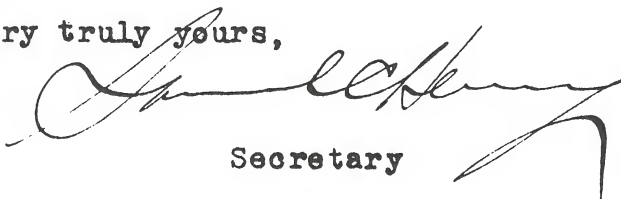
Dear Mr. Wright:

Replying to yours of April 22 I want to assure you that the N.A.R.D. will be glad to render you assistance in registering or trademarking your product, without any cost to you whatever for the services of our counsel. There are, of course, certain charges levied by the department for these services, though the sum is not large, the usual heavy cost being in counsel fees and this we can save you altogether.

My suggestion, therefore, is that you write our attorney, Mr. W. Bruce Philip, 808 Munsey Building, Washington, D.C., explaining to him your desire and stating that I have authorized you to place the matter in his hands to be taken care of for you as a member of the N.A.R.D.

Assuring you of the pleasure it affords us to be of service to you in this as in all other matters, I am,

Very truly yours,

  
Secretary

SCH:AW



THOMAS C. WRIGHT,  
DRUGGIST.

Greensburg, Ind., April 27-1933.

Mr. W. Bruce Phillipps,  
Attorney at Law,  
808 Munsey Bldg.,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir;- Inclosed you will find a label which I desire to have copyrighted. The apparent cost charged by the Government is \$6.00. I have a pamphlet of instructions mailed to me from the Department of Commerce. There are some parts which I do not understand. I wrote to the N.A.R.D. regarding this and received the following reply which I quote in full;-

" The National Association  
of Retail Druggists.  
Chicago.

April 25, 1933.

Mr. T. C. Wright,  
Greensburg, Ind.

Dear Mr. Wright;- Replying to yours of April 22 I want to assure you that the N.A.R.D. will be glad to render you assistance in registering or trademarking your product, without any cost to you whatever for the services of our counsel. There are, of course, certain charges levied by the department for these services, though the sum is not large, the usual heavy cost, being in counsel fees and this we can save you altogether.

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Assuring you of the pleasure it affords us to be of service to you in this as in all other matters, I am,

Very truly yours,  
Samuel C. Henry,  
Secretary.

I notice that Instructions from the Gov't. provide that -"The notice of copyright should appear on every copy printed." What does this mean? What notice, if any, must be given before the copyright is registered? I will appreciate any further information that you can give me.

Respectfully yours,  
Thomas C. Wright, Druggist,  
106 N. Franklin St.,  
Greensburg, Indiana.

P.S. I attach a copy of the Label that I desire copyrighted.

	<p>Dr. COVERT'S PILLS DOSE One or two. AN ACTIVE CATHARTIC T. C. WRIGHT, DRUGGIST GREENSBURG, IND.</p>
--	--

NOTICE: The society is considering hiring a part time curator for Museum. If you are interested, or if you know of an individual or husband & wife team who might be interested, please contact John Westhafer, Pat Smith, or Jackie Mendenhall.

\* \* \* \* \*

DUES: The red star on your address label indicates that your membership in the Society & subscription to the Bulletin will expire at the end of 1994. Please send dues of \$5.00 per person, and we will credit you ahead through 1995.

\* \* \* \* \*

OLD PAPERS-The titles of some old papers, pertaining to Decatur County, which have recently been preserved in clear acid free jackets. They are on display at the Museum.

1. FRONT - OLDEST PIECE OF JOB PRINTING PRINTED IN GREENSBURG 1837  
BACK - MARRIAGE LICENSE, 1860
2. FRONT - ADAMS EXPRESS CO STOCKHOLDER 1858  
BACK - 1846 RECEIPT FOR COUNTY TAX
3. 1843 BETTING ON A GAME OF CARDS
4. FRONT - HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASH DC 1893  
LETTER FROM WM. S. HOLMAN
5. CIVIL WAR LETTER 1865
6. FEE BILL OF DECATUR CO MEDICAL SOCIETY
7. FRACTIONAL CURRENCY
8. FRONT - PENSION OFFICE 1883  
BACK - 1863 OFFICERS HOSPITAL, NASHVILLE, TENN
9. FRONT - BUREAU OF PENSIONS 1897  
BACK - HEADQUARTERS DEPT OF THE CUMBERLAND 1865
10. (on front page)
11. FRONT - PREPARATIONS FROM DRUGSTORES 1872 - FORMULA FOR DIARRHEA & FLUX  
FRONT & BACK - HAZELRIGG & STEVENS, W. B. HAMILTON, & A. A. ARMINGTON APOTHECARIES

(continued)

\* \* \* \* \*

#### MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS

Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership	\$5.00	Payable by January 1st	
Life Membership	\$100.00		
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Gift	<input type="checkbox"/> Life

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#### MEMORIALS

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_



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802 E. Beechwood Dr., Grbg.  
Ph: 663-7263  
1st. V. Pres.....Allan Beall  
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(complete D. Swegman's term)  
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EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway St.  
Greensburg, IN 47240

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P.O. BOX 163  
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/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

WINTER ISSUE

Greensburg, Indiana

JANUARY 1994

OCCASION: Thirty-fourth Annual  
Dinner Meeting of the  
Historical Society of  
Decatur County.

PLACE: Greensburg Presbyterian  
Church, NE corner of the  
Courthouse Square.

DATE: Saturday evening, Feb. 26,  
1994 at 6:30 P.M.

DINNER: By the ladies of the church.  
Dinner is \$6.00 each. Please  
reserve by check sent to  
Maurice Keith, 773 E. County  
Rd. 200 N., Greensburg. Res-  
ervation deadline is evening  
of Feb. 24th.

PROGRAM: A dissertation about the  
Underground Railroad in Indiana to be  
given by Louis R. Holtzclaw of Indiana  
University will be the main event for  
the evening. Mr. Holtzclaw is a grad-  
uate of Sandcreek High School in 1951  
and taught there for 3 years. He also  
completed his doctorate & taught history  
at Ball State University. An interest-  
ing subject being given by a native of  
Decatur County, don't miss this, bring  
a friend or prospective member.

\* \* \* \* \*

MEMORIAL

In memory of Doris Zetterberg given by  
Mrs. Ferdinand (Loretta) Graf.

\* \* \* \* \*

MUSEUM GIFTS

James Parrish

\* \* \* \* \*

DONATION

Mary Parmer Roemer

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Nancy Huber-Columbus  
Rod & Mary Lee Bailey-St. Paul  
Vivian Payne (Mrs. William)-Kokomo  
Michael W. Martin  
James W. Roemer-Louisville

LAST MEETING, the Fall Meeting, was  
held at the new County Library on  
Sunday, Oct. 24th. Around 70 members  
and guests were in attendance to  
take part in an interesting program.  
The event consisted of a slide show &  
discussion of a group of old glass  
negatives donated to the Society by  
Serlett Beck, former owner of the Beck  
Studio which was located on West Main  
Street. The negatives were scenes,  
buildings and homes in Greensburg,  
Westport & St. Paul taken in the 1920's.  
Mr. Beck & his daughter were present  
from Cincinnati. Don Marlin conducted  
the program & did the photographic  
work. If anyone wishes a print of any  
of the scenes, Mr. Marlin may be able  
to produce them. Tony Owens organized  
and did the leg work for this very suc-  
cessful get-together. The Society  
thanks all who took part.

\* \* \* \* \*

Christmas Ornament Project was quite  
successful, 800 ornaments were pro-  
duced and all sold, making a profit  
for the organization of around \$2,000.  
Thanks go to Pat Smith who suggested  
the idea and did most of the work.

\* \* \* \* \*

GENEALOGY

Query-Looking for any items regarding  
"Graybiel" name. Mrs. Edmund J.  
Daeger, 5995 Singleton St.,  
Indianapolis, IN 46227.

\* \* \* \* \*



CONTINUED: APPOINTMENT AS MAYOR

After the big lineman and Tony and nearly everybody had gone, I began to think what all this quarrel could have actually been about. Of course I knew the big fellow was our detective, but what about the little fellow? It began to dawn on me that this quarrel was nothing but a grand hoax, and the whole dramatic show was put on to influence Tony and the other fellows who were present. I finally came to the conclusion that the little fellow was a confederate, and the dramatic exhibition was given to give our detective prestige among the thieves with whom he was working. And so it proved to be.

Within a few days we got a letter from our detective. He was then in the Pinkerton home office. He said he would be of no further use to us. His identity had been discovered, and a pack of thieves had got him into "Keggy" Connor's saloon and jumped on him and almost killed him. He said he had made a plan with a group of fellows to blow the Citizens National Bank safe. All the arrangements were made, and the fellows who had been doing a lot of petty thieving now were much taken and enthused with prospects of the big swag. He said he had sent into the home office to get an extra man to help him to break into the bank, and when the crowd was inside, he would have them arrested and turn them over to the U. S. Marshall. But his plans failed by some leak, he did not know.

However, I think the money spent with the Pinkertons was money well spent, as petty thieving was broken up for some time to come.

--Oscar Miller's Memoirs (Concluded)

\* \* \* \* \*

This is about the one of three Medical Societies that have been active in Decatur Co. Four subjects are discussed: the type of cases the doctors discussed at their meetings; the case of a doctor charged with 'conduct unbecoming a Doctor and gentleman'; fees charged in the 1870's & 1880's; and a case so unusual that it was published in a medical journal.

There have been articles in the Bulletin about the medical profession before, but I hope to bring you some information that perhaps you haven't read about the subject.

In 1961 there was a short paragraph about early doctors. In 1964 the information in the 1884 Atlas of Decatur Co. was reprinted. In 1965 Smiley Fowler wrote about our medical past and later that year Dr. Dickson arranged a tribute to the early doctors by staging a pageant with members taking part. In 1968 Smiley Fowler again wrote about the subject "on the lighter side." He wrote "There was a demand --rather, I should say, a dare - that I produce more information on this subject. But I clammed up, for the very good reason that I didn't know any more about it." He went on to write a humorous piece as only Smiley Fowler could.

I know of the above because this year Raymond Carr gave me a present that feels much like my birthday, Christmas, and all other "present giving" holidays rolled up into one. He gave me his collection of Bulletins from 1959 until the present. It's amazing how much information is in those Bulletins and I've been spending more time than I should reading those back copies. Having them also keeps me, I hope, from repeating what has already been written.

There will be no need to repeat information about when the medical societies started (there were three started at different times in our history) or even the names of the doctors who were members. As said earlier, however, the following information hasn't been in the Bulletins.

At the meetings of the medical societies it was usual for the doctors to read papers they prepared about certain cases they had encountered. These were generally unusual cases, but often were of normal cases that had some complications factors or the outcome was unexpected. The doctor was asked to give the paper a month ahead of time and was called "the essayest" for the month.

#### "CASES DISCUSSED"

This was during the years from 1868 - 1900, in the days when malaria, dysentery, diphtheria, tuberculosis, typhoid fever, gangrene and so on were often encountered. In the "general discussions" the doctors talked over certain cases, sometimes when a member wanted advice from his fellow doctors. On other occasions a member would tell about a particularly difficult case that had turned out well and how he obtained that result.

This came from the minutes of the meetings. I could not read every word of the handwriting, (in some cases I left the words spelled as it was spelled in the minutes book) but here are some excerpts:

1) "Dr. Ross asked the Society to discuss diphtheria relating a few cases he had treated in his practice or in consultation at Milroy.

In compliance Dr's Alexander, Wright & Bracken discussed their mode of treatment in its various stages and forms. All agreed that it was a constitutional disease the sore throat being the outward manifestation. Calmel Ipeac, Chlorate, & Potaso being the principal remedies."

2) "Dr. Alexander reported an interesting case of double pneumonia without fever. Patient made a good recovery. Dr. Ross was requested to produce a paper about the uses and abuses of cenchone(?)"

3) "Dr. Bracken asked "Why does Quinine cure ague?" which called out interesting remarks from Drs. Johnson, Bracken, Bobbitt & Cain. Quinine supplied to the blood "Taurine" which was deficient in fevers due to malaria.

Dr. Cain gave his opinion that the remedy acted through the nervous system."

4) "In the absence of Dr. Welch, the essayest, we failed to have the paper on Typhoid fever, however the society entered into a general discussion of the subject and the meeting proved to be one of some little interest."

5) "Two cases of Trichinosis were reported with a report of post mortem examined and microscopical specimens."

#### "CONDUCT UNBECOMING"

The medical society had censors who got involved in the disputes about "violating the code of ethics of the profession" that occurred from time to time. At least a couple, in these years, were asked to leave the society because of violations.



In one such case Drs. Wooden and Covert asked Dr. Wright to be present and give advice and assistance at a surgical operation on a Miss Paynter. Dr. Wright then told several people that the doctors "had caused the death of said patient, and this after having said to Drs. Wooden and Covert after the operation, that nothing more or better could have been done by any surgeons and that he believed the patient would recover.

"...the said Dr. S. V. Wright did falsely say to diverse persons that the said operators "cut off a large portion of the omentum, that nobody ever heard of the cutting off of the omentum before, and that said cutting off killed the patient.

"...the said Dr. Wright did upon hearing of the death of said Miss Paynter go to the Coroner and advise and urge him to hold an inquest on said said body avowing that the cutting off of omentum caused her death.

"...that the said Dr. Wright did enjoin the said coroner to not inform the said operators of the inquest, thereby seeking to injure them in their professional standing by a demand for an inquest without giving them an opportunity to vindicate themselves by a post mortem before the body was interred.

"...that the said Dr. S. V. Wright did apply to the Mayor of this city, and the prosecuting attorney of this Judicial District for a warrant of arrest for said operators for manslaughter, refusing however, to make such affidavit as the Statute prescribes, but wishing to make such affidavit as would cause their arrest and destroy their reputations as would result from such arrest, not knowing that such affidavit would be ...placed in the hands of the defendants.

"Said charges were referred to board of censors and upon motion the 10th day of December was agreed upon to investigate said charges and to hear the case."

The outcome was that in February, 1879 "the charges be returned to the society for the present and that Dr. Wright should incur a reprimand at the next meeting."

Dr. Wright didn't attend the next meeting but eventually did start attending again and things went on as usual.

"FEES CHARGED"

The following are some of the fees the medical society had decided were fair and all members were expected to charge the same price:

Obstetrical fee bill

Attendance in case of natural labor, not detaining	
over 4 hours.....	8.00
For each additional hour.....	.50
Instrumental delivery.....	10.00 to 25.00
Turning.....	10.00 to 25.00
Attendance in case of abortion.....	5.00 to 10.00

Surgical fee bill

Amputation at hip joint.....	100.00 to 150.00
" of thigh.....	50.00 to 100.00
" of leg or foot.....	25.00 to 50.00

" at shoulder.....	50.00 to 100.00
" of toes or fingers.....	5.00 to 10.00
Fractures of thigh, reducing & dressing.....	15.00 to 25.00
" clavicle.....	5.00 to 10.00
" ribs.....	5.00 to 10.00
Single visit and medicine (in town).....	1.00 to 1.50
each additional visit (same day).....	.50 to .75
first mile.....	1.50 to 2.00
each additional mile up to 5 miles.....	.50 to 1.00
night visits, additional per mile.....	.50
Office prescriptions or advice.....	.50 to 1.00
Small pox per visit.....	3.00 to 10.00
Venereal disease (treatment).....	5.00 to 20.00
Administering Chloroform or Ether.....	2.00 to 5.00
Extracting teeth, vaccinations, etc.....	.50 to 2.00
Certificate for applicant for life insurance.....	3.00 to 5.00

#### "UNUSUAL CASE"

The doctors took turns writing papers about diseases, injuries, etc and sent them to the Cincinnati "Lancet and Clinic." The idea was that their experiences might be published in the magazine but, as far as I could determine, only one case of a Decatur Co. physician was published. I won't repeat every word in the article but warn you that it may not be for the squeamish:

"Original Communications - A case of double colon. Reported to the Decatur County (Ind) Medical Society by John H. Alexander, M.D. Clifty, Ind:

"I take pleasure in reporting the following history of the case of Jesse M. Jackson, boy, eight years of age, four feet four and a half inches in height.

"Has been an invalid from his birth, having either diarrhoea, or obstinate constipation accompanied with great distention of the abdominal walls, the greatest perhaps when diarrhoea was present. Has been known to go for nine days without any successful effort to relieve the bowels naturally. When opened by cathartics, aided by enemata, would pass large quantities of thin fecal matter for several days, the abdomen retaining if not increasing in size. Voluntary evacuations exceedingly infrequent. Appetite variable, at times greatly impaired, oftener however ravenous, particularly desiring solids, such as beef, bread, etc, with little desire for milk or other fluids. A rectal tube had been used on several occasions when distention was the prominent symptom, resulting in the escape of large quantities of gas and immediate collapse of abdominal walls with marked relief and good appetite following.

"His general condition was one of debility from mal-assimilation; was an unusually bright boy and the fond idol of his parents. Has been very susceptible to cold and recently had a slight cough. Whenever there had been an absence of stools for 20 to 30 days, some fever appeared which usually subsided on relieving the bowels by enema, etc., but he frequently went longer, without any apparent constitutional disturbance.

"His appearance on the public streets attracted the attention of the passers by owing to the wondrous prominence of his abdomen, his form being that of a woman, in the advanced days of gestation. His locomotion was not much impeded by his immense size, his walk being erect as natural consequence of the protruberance of the bowels.



His legs and arms were very much attenuated, the skin a dirty color, not unlike that of chronic Bright's disease.

"He was taken sick the night preceding his death with but slight fever or pain and died asphyxiated within 20 hours. He craved water incessantly.

"Dr. John L. Wooden, of Greensburg, and Drs. Frank Talmadge and Geo. S. Crawford, of Clifty, very kindly conducted the post mortem examination, for which I return many thanks.

"Post mortem, one and one half hour after death. Subject greatly emaciated, shoulders thrown back, spinal column in lumbar region curved forward, dimensions above and below umbilicus 30 to 34 inches, the walls of the abdomen and thorax largely distended.

"Upon opening the abdominal cavity the first object presenting was what proved to be the colon duplicating itself, lying upon the colon proper, concealing from observation both colon and intestines, except in a space of perhaps two inches, along the median line where the small intestines were visible, which were red and full of flatus. The colon proper up to where the sigmoid flexure should have been was apparently normal, but greatly enlarged attaining diameter of at least  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The colon proper then doubled upon itself, ascending upon the descending colon eleven inches then flexing itself descended on the ascending colon twelve inches and connecting with the rectum by a flexure of the gut upon itself. On its ascent from proper position of sigmoid flexure it gradually increased in size and bulk and was imply enormous, the terminal point of the descending abnormal gut having a diameter of eight inches and containing on opening three gallons of impacted feces.

"The (second) or abnormal color showed upon its removal, after a through cleansing, a total absence of circular fibres, was not sacculated, with a consequent loss of all peristaltic action, absence of villi, with thinness of walls bordering on rupture.

"The right lobe of the liver was normal in size, and tensely pressed against the diaphragm, the lower border only resting against the right chest wall.

"The left lobe was very small, and presented the appearance of a small kidney.

"Diaphragm was attached higher up on chest wall than is usually seen. Spleen unusually small. Left kidney below normal position. Bladder not examined. Heart in healthy condition. Lungs were very light in color, small in size, and were pressed high up into the thoracic cavity by the ponderous distention below them, causing asphyxia, which was without doubt the immediate cause of death. Tubercles in upper lobes found in great abundance."

By: Pat Smith

\* \* \* \* \*

Edward Eggleston in Clay Township

Edward Eggleston was born in Vevay, Indiana in 1837. His life begun with an intellectual atmosphere. His father graduated from William and Mary College with very honors, before he died in 1846. Edward's mother, a child prodigy was said to have read Pilgrimes Progress before she was four years old. All four of there children

were novelists.

In 1850 at the age of thirteen, his mother, sister and two brothers spent two years with relatives in the town of Milford in Decatur County, Indiana. The house where they stayed is still standing on the northeast side of the Clifty Creek bridge. The upper story was destroyed by fire about thirty years ago and has since been rebuilt and is now owned by Mrs. Mary Lee.

Edward attended the log Liberty School which was located on the north side of the Vandalla road, just west of the Adams road on the farm of Mrs. Clara Stagge. All that remains is the stone foundation. Edward's total school attendance after the age of ten was only eighteen months. Before he was twenty-five he could speak in seven languages.

From his own experiences and observations and accounts he acquired directly from participants many in and around Milford, much of his writings is early history of Indiana and some cases he used actual names of some of the characters described. Drawing heavily upon his memory to provide background for his fiction and is preserved in the novel "Hoosier School Master" which he wrote in 1871.

A few hundred feet west of the school on the south side of the Vandalla road is the Stark spring that runs into Buck Run Creek on the Stagge land. In 1823 Calab Stark owned this farm and was a prominent citizen and County Commissioner during the erection of the Decatur County Courthouse. Mary Feaster Parker, who married a distant cousin of mine told me her great-grandfather Stark had sold several hogs and kept the cash at home. One night her grandfather's sister was awakened and raising up she recognized one of the Smalley's gang taking money out of the bureau dresser drawer. This and another robbery of 1000 dollars at the Drouberger Store in Old St. Louis Crossing in Bartholomew County was called the Dutchmans robbery and are recored in his story.

Milford had one doctor, Henry M. Smalley, M.D. who impressed one with his professional manner and dignity and the night of the Dronberger Store robbery a posse chased the gang north and captured most of the gang, including Milford's man of medicine, Dr. Smalley. He was released on fifty dollars bail and fleeing the state was not heard of again. (continued in next issue)

\* \* \* \* \*

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☒ Life

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